

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The specification has been amended at page 2, line 11, by changing reference numeral "38" to --37--, to correct a double reference character. The drawings have been amended at Fig. 3 to correct the noted double reference character and to conform with the specification. The Examiner's approval of the attached drawing correction is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13, 15-27, 29 have been canceled.

Claims 14 and 28 have been amended to independent form, including all parent claim limitations including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. These claims require that the defined second end (32) of the housing (22) be closed by a removable cover (62) permitting inspection and removal of the exhaust filter element (24) from the housing (22) without disassembling the inlet (34 or 36) from the housing (22) and without disassembling the outlet (34 or 36) from the housing (22).

Claims 14 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 05-237397 in view of DE 3942380 and EP 931913, and have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over DE 3942380 in view of JP 05-237397 or EP 931913. The Examiner comments that providing a removable cover in the filter is well known in the art so as to facilitate changing of the filter element therein. Applicant respectfully, but vigorously, traverses the rejection of claims 14 and 28. JP 05-237397 shows housing 11a including a portion thereof at the axial flow reversal end 17, but does not show any removable cover thereat. DE 3942380 shows housing 12 having a portion 14 at the axial flow reversal end, but does not show a removable cover thereat, nor the permitting of inspection and removal of the exhaust filter element from the housing without disassembling the inlet from the housing and without disassembling the outlet from the housing. EP 0931913 shows a housing including portions at each of the axial flow reversal ends, but does not show a removable cover permitting inspection and removal of the exhaust filter element from the

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housing without disassembling the inlet from the housing and without disassembling the outlet from the housing.

The presently disclosed and claimed combination minimizing the space required for an exhaust aftertreatment filter and also maximizing the usable area of a filter or catalytic element and also in combination permitting inspection and removal of the exhaust filter element from the housing without disassembling the inlet from the housing and without disassembling the outlet from the housing, is not taught in the references whether alone or in combination. Applicant has reviewed the applied references, but has not found the requisite teaching of the presently claimed combination.

It is respectfully submitted that the references are deficient in teaching or suggesting the particularly defined combinations of claims 14 and 28. The inspection and removal of the exhaust filter element from the housing without disassembling the inlet and without disassembling the outlet from the housing is a significant advantage and result not taught nor suggested in the prior art in the absence of applicant's disclosure.

It is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance with claims 14, 28, and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

ANDRUS, SCEALES, STARKE & SAWALL, LLP



Michael E. Taken
(Reg. No. 28,120)

100 East Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1100
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
(414) 271-7590